

The Health Consequences of Smoking

A Report of the Surgeon General: 1971

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Preface

This report is a comprehensive review of more than 20 years of research into the problem of smoking and health. This research has been carried on under the sponsorship of many groups in this country and abroad, including governments, universities, private research institutions, voluntary health agencies, and the tobacco industry.

Seven years ago, an advisory committee to the Surgeon General concluded that cigarette smoking is a serious hazard to health and is related to illness and death from lung cancer, chronic bronchopulmonary disease, cardiovascular disease and other diseases. In the intervening years, a great deal of new research has been completed. This has resulted in a growing understanding of the bio-mechanisms whereby cigarette smoking adversely affects the human organism and contributes to the development of serious illness.

It is encouraging that cigarette consumption in this country is declining. If this decline can be maintained, it will result in better health for our population and in fewer deaths among those of our citizens who are in their most productive years of life.

JESSE L. STEINFELD, M.D.,
Surgeon General.

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